

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

--1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An ear protection system consisting of:

5 a plurality of ear protection devices for preventing the penetration of harmful or disturbing sounds into the ear canal,

an encasement structure comprising at least an anterior member and posterior member, wherein said anterior 10 member and said posterior member are coupled together;

a plurality of retraction means disposed within said encasement structure for selectively retracting said plurality of ear protection devices toward said encasement structure; and

15 a mounting means for removably mounting said encasement structure upon an entity for convenient placement of said encasement structure;

wherein said plurality of retraction means operates said plurality of ear protection devices 20 independently[[.]]; and

wherein said ear protection devices are independent of one another.

--2. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to claim 1, wherein said plurality of ear protection devices comprise earplugs.

5 --3. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to claim 2, wherein said earplugs are removably coupled to said retraction means.

10 --4. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An ear protection system according to claim 1, wherein said plurality of ear protection devices are independently removable and coupled to said retraction means.

15 --5. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to claim 1, wherein the interior of said encasement structure comprises protruding axes perpendicular to said anterior member.

20 --6. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to claim 1, wherein said encasement structure is constructed of plastic.

--7. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to claim 1, wherein said retraction means comprises a cord for

coupling said plurality of ear protection devices to said encasement structure.

--8. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to claim 5 7, wherein said retraction means comprises spools for mounting said cord.

--9. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to claim 1, wherein said retraction means comprises a spring loaded 10 locking mechanism for securing the extension of said plurality of ear protection devices.

--10. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to claim 9, wherein said spring loaded locking mechanism 15 comprises a thumb slide.

--11. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to claim 9, wherein said spring loaded locking mechanism comprises a push button.

20

--12. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to claim 9, wherein said spring-loaded locking mechanism comprises a ratchet.

--13. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to  
claim 1, wherein said mounting means comprises a clip-on  
means.

5 --14. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to  
claim 13, wherein said clip-on means is rotatable.

--15. (ONCE AMENDED) A method of ear protection consisting of the steps of:

providing an encasement structure comprising at least an anterior member and posterior member, wherein said 5 anterior member and said posterior member are removably coupled together;

preventing the penetration of harmful or disturbing sounds into the ear canal by providing a plurality of ear protection devices;

10 selectively retracting at least one of said plurality of ear protection devices, wherein said selectively retracting is executed by at least one of a plurality of independent retraction means;

securely stowing said plurality of ear protection 15 devices adjacent to said encasement structure; and

mounting said encasement structure upon an entity for convenient placement of said encasement structure with removable mounting means.

20 --16. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method of ear protection according to claim 15, wherein said ear protection devices are independently removable and coupled to said retraction means.

--17. (ORIGINAL) A method of ear protection according to claim 15, wherein the interior of said encasement structure comprises protruding axes, wherein said protruding axes are perpendicular to said anterior member.

5

--18. (ORIGINAL) A method of ear protection according to claim 15, wherein said retraction means comprises a cord mounted on spools.

10 --19. (ORIGINAL) A method of ear protection according to claim 15, wherein said retraction means comprises a cord mounted on spools; and wherein said interior of said encasement structure comprises protruding axes, wherein said protruding axes are perpendicular to said posterior member; further wherein said spools are mounted on said protruding axes of said encasement structure.

15

20 --20. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method of ear protection according to claim 15, wherein said retracting step comprises securing each of the extensions of said plurality of ear protection devices by a spring loaded locking mechanism.

--21. (ORIGINAL) A method of ear protection according to  
claim 20, wherein said spring-loaded locking mechanism  
comprises a thumb slide.

5 --22. (ORIGINAL) A method of ear protection according to  
claim 20, wherein said spring-loaded locking mechanism  
comprises a push button.

10 --23. (ORIGINAL) A method of ear protection according to  
claim 20, wherein said spring-loaded locking mechanism  
comprises a ratchet.

--24. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An ear protection system consisting of:

a plurality of ear protection devices for preventing the penetration of harmful and disturbing sounds into the  
5 ear canal,

an encasement structure comprising at least two members, wherein said members are coupled together; further, wherein said encasement structure is coupled to said ear protection device; and

10 a mounting means for removably mounting said encasement structure upon an entity for convenient placement of said encasement structure;

wherein said plurality of ear protection devices are coupled to said encasement means by a plurality of  
15 retraction means for selectively retracting said plurality of ear protection devices toward said encasement structure;  
[[and]]

wherein said plurality of retraction means operate said plurality of ear protection devices  
20 independently[.]; and

wherein said ear protection devices are independent of one another.

--25. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to claim 24, wherein said ear protection devices comprise earplugs.

5 --26. (CANCELLED)

--27. (PREEVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An ear protection system according to claim 24, wherein said plurality of ear protection devices are independently removable and coupled  
10 to said encasement structure.

--28. (CANCELLED)

--29. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An ear protection device according to claim [[28]] 24, wherein said plurality of ear protection devices are independently removable and coupled to said plurality of retraction means.

--30. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An ear protection system according to claim [[28]] 24, wherein each of said plurality of retraction means comprises a cord for independently coupling each of said plurality of ear protection devices to said encasement structure.

--31. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to  
claim 30, wherein said retraction means comprises spools  
for mounting said cord.

5 --32. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to  
claim 28, wherein said retraction means comprises a spring-  
loaded locking mechanism for securing the extension of said  
plurality of ear protection devices.

10 --33. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to  
claim 32, wherein said spring-loaded locking mechanism  
comprises a thumb slide.

15 --34. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to  
claim 32, wherein said spring-loaded locking mechanism  
comprises a push button.

20 --35. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to  
claim 32, wherein said spring-loaded locking mechanism  
comprises a ratchet.

--36. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to  
claim 24, wherein said encasement structure is constructed  
of plastic.

--37. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to  
claim 24, wherein said mounting means comprises a clip-on  
means.

5 --38. (ORIGINAL) An ear protection system according to  
claim 37, wherein said clip-on means is rotatable.

--39.-43. (CANCELLED)